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PAGE 01 NATO 04364 01 OF 02 241705Z

43

ACTION EUR 20

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~~SECRET~~ SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 4364/1

SUBJECT: POLITICAL WARNING

1. AS FORECAST IN USNATO 04330, FRG (ONCKEN) RAISED
QUESTION OF POLITICAL WARNING IN NAC MEETING 23 AUGUST.
SINCE THE THRUST OF HIS PRESENTATION WAS TO QUESTION THE
VALIDITY OF POLITICAL WARNING AS A BASIS FOR FORCE
PLANNING AND DEFENSE ACTIONS, NAC AGREED TO REFER
PROBLEM TO FOR RELEASE 1999/09/08 : CIA-RDP79B00972A000100400003-4
IS TO CHECK SIGNALS WITH WASHINGTON ON USNATO HANDLING

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PAGE 02 NATO 04364 01 OF 02 241705Z

OF PROBLEM, WHEN IT NEXT COMES UP--PROBABLY IN DRC. THE POINT HAS ALSO BEEN MADE IN THE MILITARY COMMITTEE--SEE USDEL 480/68 OF 22 AUGUST 1968.

2. THE IMPLICATIONS SUGGESTED BY ONCKEN IN THE NAC AND HOFMANN IN POLADS WERE THAT NATO ASSESSMENTS OF SOVIET INTENTIONS HAD BEEN INCORRECT, THAT NATO SECURITY IS BETTER SERVED BY ADEQUATE STANDING FORCES IN PLACE THAN BY RELIANCE ON POLITICAL WARNING TO SET IN TRAIN REDEPLOYMENT AND MOBILIZATION ACTIONS, AND THAT SACEUR SHOULD NOT BE REQUIRED TO WAIT FOR A POLITICAL ASSESSMENT BEFORE REQUESTING OR DIRECTING IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES OF MILITARY VIGILANCE.

3. THE AGREED NATO CONCEPT UNDERLYING WHAT IS NOW CALLED "POLITICAL WARNING" IS ESSENTIALLY THAT IF NATO FINDS ITSELF IN A PERIOD OF INCREASING POLITICAL TENSION IT SHOULD LOOK TO ITS DEFENSES. THE LANGUAGE OF PARAGRAPH 23 OF 1967 MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE (DPC/D(67)23) IS MORE PRECISE, SUGGESTING TIMELY DEPLOYMENT OF FORCES, REINFORCEMENT OF THE FLANKS, AND MOBILIZATION; BUT THE CONCEPT IS SIMPLY THAT OF BEING PREPARED IN ADVANCE TO TAKE CERTAIN STEPS IN TIMES OF INCREASED TENSION. THE "WARNING" INVOLVED NEED NOT BE OF A SPECIFIC ENEMY ACTION, BUT MERELY AN OBSERVED CHANGE IN BEHAVIOR AND/OR CAPABILITY.

4. SUBJECT TO ANY WASHINGTON ADVICE, WE WOULD PROPOSE TO HANDLE THIS SUBJECT ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:
(A) NATO CORRECTLY READ THE SIGNS OF POLITICAL TENSION AS WARNING TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA, NOT TO NATO. IT TOOK A POLITICAL DECISION NOT TO REACT IN ANY WAY THAT COULD GIVE THE SOVIETS AN EXCUSE FOR INTERVENTION AND THUS TO ACCEPT THE RISK OF NOT TAKING OVERT READINESS MEASURES, E.G. REDEPLOYMENTS, MOBILIZATION, ETC.

(B) THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL WARNING CLEARLY SHOULD NOT BE STRETCHED TO MEAN GUARANTEED AND PRECISE TACTICAL FORECASTS OF FUTURE EVENTS. POLADS ASSESSMENTS NATURALLY DID NOT ATTEMPT TO PREDICT A MILITARY INTERVENTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA ON A GIVEN DATE. WHAT THEY DID WAS TO JUDGE THAT SOVIET MILITARY MOVES WERE DESIGNED FIRST TO PRESSURE CZECH GOVERNMENT INTO LINE AND IF THAT FAILED, TO BE IN A POSITION TO INTERVENE AT A MOMENT OF

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PAGE 03 NATO 04364 01 OF 02 241705Z

SOVIET CHOICE. POLADS DID NOT, AS HOFMANN IMPLIED (USNATO 4330, PARAGRAPH 5) SAY THAT INTERVENTION WOULD NOT OCCUR PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER 5-9. THEY MERELY EXPRESSED THE VIEW, WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE CORRECT, THAT THE CRISIS WAS NOT RESOLVED BY THE CIERNA-BRATISLAVA MEETINGS AND THAT PRESSURE PROBABLY WOULD BE SUSTAINED AT LEAST TO THE SEPTEMBER 9 SPECIAL CZECH PARTY CONGRESS.

(C) WE DO TAKE THE CONCEPT AS CALLING FOR EARLY AND CONTINUING POLITICAL CONSULTATION AND ASSESSMENT AND GUIDANCE AS APPROPRIATE TO NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES (I.E. WHEN JUSTIFIED BY INCREASE IN POLITICAL TENSION). WE SEE THIS AS A CONTINUING PROCESS, PARALLEL TO ASSESSMENT BY THE NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES OF CHANGES IN THE MILITARY SITUATION FACING NATO.

(D) FINAL DECISIONS IN THE FORM OF POLITICAL GUIDANCE ON MEASURES OF MILITARY VIGILANCE, ALERT MEASURES, REDEPLOYMENT, MOBILIZATION OR MOVE OF REINFORCEMENT FORCES SHOULD BE TAKEN IN LIGHT OF BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY ASSESSMENTS IF POSSIBLE, BUT COULD IN SOME CIRCUMSTANCES BE TAKEN ON BASIS OF MILITARY CIRCUMSTANCES ALONE OR ON THE BASIS OF POLITICAL ASSESSMENT ALONE. IN THIS REGARD, DURING THIS PARTICULAR CRISIS, THE ORIGINAL ASSESSMENT BY SACEUR, WHICH WAS ENDORSED BY THE MILITARY COMMITTEE, WAS IN ACCORD WITH THE POLITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE NAC. THEREFORE, IN CONSIDERING WHAT SUBSEQUENT MILITARY MEASURES MIGHT BE TAKEN TO ENHANCE NATO'S OVERALL DEFENSE POSTURE, SACEUR HAD AVAILABLE AND WAS RESPONSIVE TO AGREED COMPLEMENTARY MILITARY AND POLITICAL ASSESSMENTS. AT AUGUST 21 NAC, GENERAL PARKER PUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES OF MILITARY VIGILANCE INTO PROPER FOCUS WHEN HE POINTED OUT THAT SACEUR ALREADY HAS AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THESE ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE, BUT THAT SACEUR WOULD SEEK TO CONSULT WITH THE COUNCIL AS LONG AS TIME PERMITTED.

(E) AS GERMAN DEPUTY PRESS SPOKESMAN AHLERS POINTED OUT (BONN 15932) CZECH EVENTS VINDICATE CONCEPT OF WARNING TIME IN THAT SOVIETS REQUIRED SUBSTANTIAL TIME TO PREPARE FOR AND STAGE THIS INVASION.

(F) GIVEN THE MILITARY ODDS, CZECHS APPEAR TO HAVE USED WARNING TIME TO PREPARE POLITICALLY, I.E. TO OPERATE GOVERNMENT, ISSUE RADIO BROADCASTS, ETC, EVEN UNDER OCCUPATION; AND THEY HAVE DONE SO SUCCESSFULLY.

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PAGE 04 NATO 04364 01 OF 02 241705Z

5. AMBASSADOR CLEVELAND USED SOME OF THE ABOVE POINTS IN HIS REMARKS AT THE 23 AUGUST NAC. HE STATED: "WE MAY NOT LEARN FROM THESE EVENTS AS MUCH ABOUT 'POLITICAL

GP-3. CLEVELAND

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